

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, December 25, 1876

Letter from Miss Mabel Hubbard to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. Christmas Day.

Like a Christmas present lightening and brightening, and yet saddening the day for me came your telegram this morning. Can you forgive me for my doubt of you or is each want of faith in one so promised to you not to be forgiven? I hope not, I am at least far more sorry now than I ever was angry with you. It seemed so impossible to me that you could have received other messages after Papa's words, and I was strengthened in my disbelief from your making no mention of any other telegram and from two words you used "sudden determination" which I thought meant you came to your resolution of returning by yourself. Then do you remember how you acted last spring about going to Philadelphia. You said yourself that but for my presence and persuasion you would not have gone. So I concluded in this case that you had deemed your duty to your parents paramount to every other consideration. So in a measure it is, but I thought and Papa thought you had gone off without so much as trying to find out what the business was, and whether it was really so urgent, or could be postponed. I thought it was and that it was my fault that you had gone, because I did not tell you all Papa told us, how if you had already left for home I was to telegraph you to return. Do you wonder I have been so unhappy about it, I know how strong your love for your parents was, how much you felt being absent this season and I did not know how far your sense of obligation to others would keep you from going off, whether they would or not, whether your going did them an injury or not. It was just Philadelphia over again, two different interests pulling you different ways. Now I have told you all, can you forgive me, and the letter I wrote yesterday. 2 What it said I have the remotest idea having had no time even to finish it. But I did say I was glad you went home if it did not interfere with your duty to others, and how I know it has not I am thankful and so glad you went. There are times when a mother's love is even more than any one else's,

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and I am glad to that you were ready to sacrifice anything so long as you alone were concerned in order to do her a pleasure. And now will you let me tell you that I think this will be in the end a blessing to me, for it has taught me to trust you, as I never did before and I do not think I shall doubt you so again. Dear Alec goodbye, I hope you are having a very Merry Christmas. I long for your return that I may show you my lovely presents, but nevertheless this has been a sad Christmas and I shall be glad when it is over.

Sister goes tonight with Papa to Boston, I would write more but I have been busy all day with church and Papa's copying and it is now mail time.

Please tell your Mother I tried to send her a Christmas card, but could find few satisfactory ones and beside was not sure how she would receive it when I seemed to recent your going home. I didn't you know, but am so thankful you were able to do so.

With very much love, Your loving, Mabel. Mamma who has been about as troubled as I have says "give Alec my love, and tell him I am very glad he went home to see his Father and Mother." Auntie Berta was sure you were all right and had heard from Mr. Pollok, I would have but for those two fatal words and the Phila. experience.